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ABSTRACT

A study investigated the effects of a read-aloud program in the Stockton Unified School District, Kansas, the independent variables being type of instruction, gender, family structure, and perception of family. The dependent variables were Reading Vocabulary, Reading Comprehension, and Reading Total from the Science Research Associates test. Subjects were 43 fourth-grade children divided as follows: 19 children in the school read-aloud group; 14 children in the home read-aloud group; and 10 children in the control group. Of 18 comparisons made, 3 were statistically significant: school read-aloud group and Reading Vocabulary; school read-aloud group and Reading Total; and gender and Total Score for the home group. Results indicated that: read-aloud subjects who were read to by the teacher at school benefited more than the control group, and girls who were read to by parents achieved more than boys. Results also indicated no association between: (1) a read-aloud program implemented in the child's home and reading achievement; (2) gender and reading achievement in the school read-aloud program; (3) family structure and reading achievement in either read-aloud program; and (4) perception of family and the school read-aloud program. Significant main effects indicated the following: school read-aloud subjects had significantly higher scores than the control group for Reading Vocabulary and Reading Total; and girls who participated in the home read-aloud program had significantly higher achievement for Reading Total. (Six tables of data are included, and 19 appendixes containing letters to parents, pamphlets, lists of books, and a questionnaire are attached.) (Contains 28 references.) (Author/RS)

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A FOURTH GRADE READ-ALOUD PROGRAM

being

A Thesis Presented to the Graduate Faculty

of the Fort Hays State University in

Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for

the Degree of Master of Science

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the researcher was to investigate the effects of a read-aloud program. Type of instruction, gender, family structure and perception of family were the independent variables investigated. The dependent variables were Reading Vocabulary, Reading Comprehension, and Reading Total from the Science Research Associates test. Prescores on the Science Research Test (S.R.A) were employed as the covariate measure.

The sample consisted of 43 children from the fourth grade. The school read-aloud group consisted of 19 children; 14 children participated in the home read-aloud group, and there were 10 children in the control group. A pretest/posttest three group design was employed. Six composite null hypotheses were tested employing a one-way analysis of covariance.

A total of 18 comparisons were made. Of the 18 comparisons, 3 were statistically significant at the .05 level. The significant comparisons were the following: school read-aloud group and Reading Vocabulary, school read-aloud group and Reading Total, and gender and Total Score for the home group.

The results of the following study appear to support the following generalizations:

1. Participants in a read-aloud program who are read to by a teacher at school benefitted more from a read-aloud program than a control group,
2. girls who were read-aloud to by parents achieved more than boys,
3. no association between a read-aloud program implemented in the child's home and reading achievement,

4. no association between gender and reading achievement in a read-aloud program implemented at school,
5. no association between family structure and reading achievement in a read-aloud program, and
6. no association between perception of family and a read-aloud program.

The significant main effects indicated the following:

1. Those who participated in the school read-aloud group had significantly higher scores than the control group for the dependent variable Reading Vocabulary.
2. Those who participated in the school read-aloud program had significantly higher scores than the control group for the dependent variable Reading Total.
3. Girls who participated in the home read-aloud program had significantly higher achievement for the dependent variable Reading Total.

Introduction

"After decades during which it was scorned by administrators and supervisors, reading aloud is returning to favor in the U.S." (Trelease, 1989a, p. 200). The Commission on Reading reported, "The single most important activity for building knowledge required for eventual success in reading, is reading aloud to children. This is especially so during the preschool years" (Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, & Wilkinson, 1985, p. 23). Elkind, (1989, p. 141) agreed with the commission. He wrote, "Reading regularly to children and giving them picture books of their own, stimulates their imagination and helps them view reading as relaxing and fun." Kimmel and Segal, (1983) also supported this idea. They wrote, "Reading aloud is one of the most basic of educational practices" (p. 30).

If the Commission on Reading spoke so favorably about reading aloud, one must ask, "Why is it so important?" Answered simply, Trelease (1989b, p. 2) wrote, "The initial reasons for reading aloud are the same reasons you talk to a child: to reassure, to entertain, to inform or explain, to arouse curiosity, and to inspire--and to do it all personally, not impersonally with a machine." Trelease went on to state, "All these experiences create or strengthen a positive attitude about reading, and attitude is the foundation stone upon which you build appetites." Trelease also suggested a second reason why reading aloud was so important. He wrote, "A secondary reason, and of great importance in an age of rising illiteracy, is the established fact that regular reading aloud strengthens children's reading, writing, and speaking skills -- and thus the entire civilizing process" (p.2).

There has been much controversy among educators as to when to begin to

read aloud to children, and how long the reading aloud should continue. Trelease (1989b, p. 2) reported, "Reading aloud to children should began at the same time that parents begin to talk to their children - the first day of life." However, Michener (1988 p. 120) saw this differently. She stated, "Parents and teachers should begin reading aloud to children as soon as they feel comfortable in doing so." A brochure published by the Albany Area Reading Council, (as cited in Trelease, 1989b, p. 23) stated,

> All babies are born equal... Not one can speak, count, read, or write at birth... but by the time they go to kindergarten, they are not equal. The difference, of course, is between the parents who 'raise' their children, as opposed to parents who 'watch' them grow up.

Maeroff (1989) also had strong opinions about when to begin reading aloud to children. He wrote, "A primary mission during the early years should be to instill a love of language, both oral and written, in a child. Children can be led to believe that something wonderful and miraculous lurks between the covers of books, something that they will want to explore for themselves just as soon as they are able" (p. 45). He also stated,

> Some parents tend to think of reading aloud as an activity to be limited to the preschool years or perhaps lasting for only a few years in the elementary school. This is shortsighted, according to the experts, who urge that reading aloud continue at least into junior high and perhaps even into high school. When older children are involved, parents and children should, of course, take turns doing the reading." (p. 55)

In his book, Wiener (1988) stated, "Read regularly to your child, especially after he passes the six month mark" (p. 160). He went on to write,

> Parents should be reading to their children as soon as possible. You want your toddler to take an interest in books. Let him touch the pages and flip through them whenever he wants to. Show with your words and actions how much you approve of his holding books close and looking at the pictures. (p. 161)

Mendoza (1985, p. 523) thought parental modeling was a very important aspect in the child's learning to love books. She wrote, "Both parents, but particularly fathers, need to be encouraged to read to their children at home. The role model of a parent who enjoys reading is vital in motivating children to read."

Another point of controversy among educators was how often children should be read to. Gatheral (1981, p. 34) wrote, "Teachers of all grades--especially at the upper levels--should read to their students, and they should do it often. Four times a day is a bare minimum, and six to eight times is preferable." Gatheral went on to write, "Read-aloud time might last only a few seconds, or it might fill an hour. The point is, reading aloud should be done, and done often." Mendoza (1985, p. 524) wrote, "Teachers and parents assume that once children have become independent readers, there is little or no need to read to them. The fact that they still enjoy and benefit from reading aloud is often overlooked." The Commission on Reading stated, "Reading aloud is a practice that should continue through the grades" (Anderson, et al, 1985, p. 51).

A host of other researchers maintained that reading aloud was an important part of childhood. Among them were Kimmel and Segal (1983). They wrote, "Reading aloud should continue all through the school years, for many reasons." Among these reasons, the authors contended that being read to "promotes rather than retards children's desire to read independently"

(p. 14). They contend that reading aloud was important because some children naturally grasp material better through their ears than their eyes. The authors also wrote, "All through their school years, young people can enjoy listening to books that would be too difficult for them to read on their own" (p. 15). Kimmel and Segal also wrote, "Seeing adults reading with enjoyment increases the chances that children will become lifelong readers." (p. 18).

> Reading aloud to children from literature that is meaningful to them is now widely acknowledged among experts to be the most effective, as well as the simplest, and least expensive, way to foster in children a lifelong love of books and reading. The task now is to pass this word along to individual parents, school administrators, and classroom teachers. (Kimmel and Segel, 1983, p. 12)

Here within lies the conflict. Whose job is it anyway to read outloud to these children? Kimmel and Segal (1983) wrote, "Teachers can extend their effectiveness by encouraging parents to read aloud at home" (p. 32). Trelease (1989b) agreed with the idea of parent modeling. He wrote,

> You became a reader because you saw and heard someone you admired enjoying the experience, someone led you to the world of books even before you could read, let you taste the magic of stories, took you to the library, and allowed you to stay up later at night to read in bed. (p. 10)

Trelease postulated that an essential ingredient was the other person involved in reading, be it the mother, father, brother, classmate, or teacher. He wrote, "We are social creatures and reading is a social experience. Without others there would be no need for language, be it speaking, reading, or writing." Trelease went on to state,

> You can't teach a child to speak by locking him in a room filled with tape recordings. He needs to interact with others in order to find meaning. So too with reading. Skill sheets, workbooks, basal readers, and flash cards are not enough. To convey meaning you need someone sharing the meaning and flavor of real stories with the students. (p. 10)

Schickedanz (as quoted in Maeroff, 1989) stated, "Children who become good readers are those who have had experiences with print during their early years. They probably have seen their parents reading for pleasure to obtain information. Reading becomes a part of their lives long before elementary school" (p. 46).

Wiener (1988) also supported the notion that parents must convey the message to children that printed words bring joy and enthusiasm to their lives. He wrote,

> Instead of waiting for bedtime to sink your teeth into that juicy new selection, take ten minutes before dinner to let your youngster watch you read. Perhaps he'll join you with his own book. Talk about what you're reading. You want to set yourself up as a model for him to emulate. (p. 81)

He went on to state, "You, as a parent, are one of the few people who can pass on this banner of delight, this notion of books as pleasure givers. Where else in fact, but at home, does a child see people reading for the fun of it?" (p. 161). Taylor (1986, p. 3) agreed with this notion. He stated, "The first and most significant use of oral reading, is to bring information or give pleasure to an audience."

Parental participation was a necessary ingredient in getting children to read. Trelease (1989a, p. 203) stated, "No education program can survive without the support of parents." Trelease saw this parental support being

accomplished in two ways. "By selling its importance to tomorrow's parents who are sitting in today's classrooms, and by showing today's parents how simple and important reading aloud can be in promoting children's literary abilities."

Some children do not have the opportunity to participate in a read-aloud setting at home, so is it to be assumed that these children will never grow up to enjoy reading and the printed word? Definitely not! Not only was it important for parents to play an important role in the reading world of their children, it was also imperative for all people involved to be faithful to a read-aloud program. This also includes teachers. A successful read-aloud program must be school-wide. Miller and McKenna (1989) agreed with this thought. They wrote, "People of all ages enjoy being read to. Children can be shown the rewards of reading ability in a most tantalizing way through their teachers' reading aloud on occasion." (p. 185). The Commission on Reading (Anderson, et al, 1985) also supported the idea of teachers playing an important part in the reading lives of children. They ascertained,

> Oral reading should not be discarded once children are fairly skilled readers. Opportunities to read aloud and listen to others read aloud are features of the literate environment, whatever the reader's level. There is no substitute for a teacher who reads children good stories. It whets the appetite of children for reading, and provides a model of skillful oral reading. it is a practice that should continue throughout the grades. (p. 51)

Trelease (1989b) also addressed this. He wrote, "Of all the qualities a teacher might possess, the most contagious is enthusiasm." He went on to state, "If a teacher is not enthusiastic about books and reading, they are definitely in the wrong profession." (p. 36).

It is necessary for both parents and the school to work together to help the child obtain the skills and the desire to read. This was pointed out by Rasinski and Fredricks (1989, p. 84). They stated, "If teachers want to improve students' reading performance, it makes great sense to get parents involved." Rasinski and Fredricks (1989, p. 84) went on to write, "Given proper guidance and support, parents can supplement, in powerful fashion, learning that takes place in the school." Henderson's study (cited in Rasinski & Fredricks, 1989) reported evidence that clearly indicated the same findings. "By involving parents in students' education can lead to impressive gains in achievement" (p. 84). Durkin's landmark study, (as cited in Rasinski & Fredricks, 1989, p. 84) indicated, "Children who learned to read early had parents who played a critical role in their child's early success in reading." Durkin found that in these homes, the parents acted as role models by reading themselves and by reading to their children.

As reported by the Commission on Reading (Anderson et al,1985), it is not only important for a child to be read aloud to, it is also important for a child to do a significant amount of reading aloud to some else. The commission wrote, (p. 32)

> Authorities recommend that children read a selection silently before they read it aloud. Research suggests that this practice improves oral reading fluency. However, classroom observations reveal that silent reading before oral reading is frequently omitted, which is like being asked to perform a play without having read the script before-hand. Consequently, unless the children are already good readers, the oral reading is slow and halting, and the experience may be needlessly stressful for some children.

Some children will need to be encouraged to read silently as well as orally as pointed out by Kimmel and Segal (1983). They wrote, "Reading needs to be encouraged. It is like playing the piano, once you learn the notes, you still have to practice" (p. 55). Koskinen & Blum (1986, p.70) also agreed with this generalization. They wrote, "Reading, like playing a musical instrument, is not something that is mastered once and for all at a certain age. Rather, it is a skill that continues to improve through practice." The Commission on Reading (Anderson et al, 1985) reported, "No one would expect a novice pianist to sight read a new selection every day, but that is exactly what is expected of the beginning reader" (p. 53). Applebee (cited in Trelease, 1989a, p. 8) wrote, "Reading is an accrued skill. The more you read, the better you get at it; and the better you get at reading, the more you like it. Thus, the more you like it, the more you do it." But, practice comes first, and practice of reading will not occur without desire. Teachers and parents must first plant the desire to read in children. "If children don't read much, they can't get much better at it. And they will not read if they hate it" (Trelease, 1989a, p.8). The key to all learning is desire. Trelease went on to state, "In concentrating almost exclusively on teaching the child <u>how</u> to read, we have forgotten to teach him to <u>want</u> to read. What you make a child love and desire is more important than what you make him learn." (p. 8). Cutright (1989) reported that there were ways in which one could encourage a love of reading in children. Among these were, "To read to her when she is young, and to let her see that reading is an important part of your life." (p. 110). Rosenblatt (1978), and Walker and Kuerbitz (1979, both cited in Michener, 1988) also emphasized the importance of children having fun while reading. They wrote, "Reading aloud to children gives them a feeling that reading is important, fun, and informative" (p. 118).

Many children do not have the opportunity to enjoy themselves and take pleasure in their read-aloud ability because they have been bombarded with skills papers and worksheets . They have been turned off to the idea of reading before they even got a chance to begin. Trelease (1989b) wrote about this concern. He stated, "Amid all the workbook pages and academic jargon, we daily overlook the very purpose of literature: to provide meaning in our lives" (p. 13). Allington (1977, p. 58) addressed this issue. He wrote,"To develop the ability to read fluently requires the opportunity to read. But, it seems that the poorest readers receive the heaviest doses of skill instruction and the least opportunity to read aloud ."

Allington (1980) further stated,

> It seems obvious that poor readers do not complete equivalent amounts of reading in context generally, and have few opportunities to practice silent reading behaviors. Since one must read to improve and extend reading abilities, this deficit may, in fact, be a contributing factor in poor readers underachievement. (p. 874)

Ohanian also wrote on this topic. She stated,

> If our reluctant readers have not heard stories, how can we as teachers expect the words on the programmed ditto sheets or the words in the carefully planned basal series or the words in the brightly colored reading kits to sing for them? (1981, p. 47)

Tollefson (as cited in Trelease, 1989b) agreed with the importance of reading aloud to children and not concentrating as much on the written work. Tollefson, an elementary principal, stated,

> I believe children need to be read to every day and given time to practice whole reading (SSR). These two things should take

> place every day without fail. Yes, even if it means a basal reading story hasn't been done, vocabulary words not finished, and a workbook page must be skipped. (p. 92)

Allington (1977, p. 60) maintained that poor readers were never given material that they could read fluently. "These readers continue to stumble along one word at a time, which results in a slow, choppy style." Allington went on to state, "multiple reading strategy allows the reader the opportunity to break out of this mold. By rereading a selection several times, the student begins to develop fluency." Koskinen and Blum (1986, p. 73) also supported this idea of multiple reading or repeated reading. They stated that one purpose of repeated reading "is to give the reader the feel of fluent reading." They went on to state, "The material should be at a level where mastery is possible!" Koskinen and Blum pointed out that children enjoy repeated reading, especially when paired with a classmate. "These students enjoy working together and derive considerable pleasure and self confidence from hearing themselves read so well" (p. 74). Hartup (as cited in Hiebert, 1980, p. 877) also addressed this topic. He stated, "Interaction with peers provides a healthy arena for learning and reinforcing new proficiencies." Hiebert, (1980, p. 877) agreed with the idea of using peers as reading teachers. He wrote, "Since children outnumber adults in most classrooms twenty or thirty to one, the learning opportunities in a reading program can be multiplied many times if teachers include peer-directed activities." Thus, if children are enjoying themselves, feel good about their reading skills, and can work in pairs using the buddy system, the first step of the educational process has begun.

Reading aloud is not only an important aspect of the home and school, but other places as well. Kimmel (as cited in Maeroff, 1989) thought reading aloud was so importaht she began a pilot reading program in Pittsburgh. State

and local funds were spent on paperback books so that packets of book could be distributed to preschool children at reading workshops. Kimmel was also responsible for having volunteers read aloud to disadvantaged children in women's shelters, and in the waiting rooms of juvenile courts. Bush (1989) also supported this idea. Bush has chosen literacy as a focal point to devote her time and energies while serving as the first lady. She believed, "not being able to read is one of the root causes of so many of our social problems. These problems include drug abuse, teenage pregnancy, unemployment, and even AIDS" (p. 10). She contended that the very people who were involved in these social problems were the people who did not have the opportunity, or the skills, to read the literature pertaining to their particular problem.

One has to ask, "If reading aloud is so successful, and so profitable to children, why is it not more prevalent in today's society?" Kimmel & Segal (1983, p. 28) wrote, "Despite all the research and expert opinion as to the value of reading aloud to children, precious little seems to be going on in the schools." They believe that the current movement in the schools toward accountability discourages teachers from reading to their students. They wrote, "Accountability rests on testing and testing results. When a student's success is judged by their performances on standard tests, testable skills take priority in teaching." They went on to state, "Tests, unfortunately are limited in what they can measure. A student's warm memory of a story shared with classmates and teacher can't be quantified on a test, even if the memory will last for years" (p. 29). Trelease (1989b) agreed with this point. He wrote, "Two things have conspired to make reading aloud one of the best kept secrets in education; the vast number of distractions with the American home, and the 'test and measurement' syndrome in the classroom" (p. 10).

Since reading aloud is such an asset and can help today's children in such a great way, teachers and parents must do all that is possible in order to spend

the quality time it takes to read aloud each day. Kimmel & Segal (1983) maintained that to make time for reading aloud in the home, parents must, "take a stand against unlimited television viewing." They stated that watching television "is not a shared experience in most families; reading aloud is" (p. 24).

There are many success stories related to reading aloud to children, and the good that these read-aloud programs have done. Meter (1990) is one of these success stories. In his study, Meter found that there was an association between parents of second grade children reading aloud to their children, and the improvement of reading achievement. Meter also found that there was an association between the researcher reading aloud to children, and the improvement of reading achievement. The read-aloud program which was implemented by Meter extended for a period of nine weeks, with the children being read-aloud to by either the researcher, or by their parents.

Meter (1990) reported the following comparisons were statistically significant at the .05 level. Those who were read-aloud to, compared to the control group, had higher reading achievement on the following dependent variables:

1. phoneme/grapheme - consonants,
2. phoneme/grapheme - vowels,
3. vocabulary in context,
4. word part clues,
5. reading comprehension, and
6. total reading battery

Meter also found that children who participated in Chapter I reading did significantly better than those who did not for the dependent variable - vocabulary in context.

Trelease (1989b, p. 34) also cited some success stories related to reading aloud to children. He wrote,

> The benefits that come from reading aloud help the entire curriculum, especially since reading *is* the curriculum. The principal ingredient of all learning and teaching is language. Not only is it the tool with which we communicate the lesson; it is also the product the student hands back to us in math or science or history class.

In that sense, Trelease went on to say, "the classroom teacher who reads aloud helps the class to become better listeners and develop greater verbal skills" (1989b, p. 34).

Trelease also accentuated the importance of children reading to each other, and the necessity to pair these partners in differing reading abilities. He wrote,

> If students are not read to, if day after day the only reading they hear is the drone of fellow members in the 'turtle' group, they are certain to finish the year sounding like a 'turtle.' We need to balance the scales and let children know through reading aloud that there is more to reading than worksheets, and we must do it before they close the door on reading for the rest of their lives. The child who is unaware of the riches of literature certainly can have no desire for them.

From a teacher's point of view, Ohanian (1981 p.47) said it best. She wrote, "Yea, though I walk in the shadow of conglomerate criterion referenced curricula, I will fear no evil; the children, they comfort me."

Gatheral (1981) summed up the importance of reading aloud and its impact on children and their success as individuals throughout their lives.

> Reading aloud is one way to make children better readers and to introduce them to the variety and excitement in the world. It reaffirms the importance of their own experiences and opens them to ideas, events and images that enrich their lives.

Statement of Problem

The purpose of the researcher was to investigate the effectiveness of a read-aloud program.

Importance of the Research

The study was conducted to obtain information concerning the effects of a read-aloud program and its impact on reading achievement scores. The results of the present study could be beneficial to classroom teachers, administrators, school board members, and parents, as well as others who are interested in the reading achievement of today's youth. The study would bring to the forefront the importance of reading aloud to today's children, and the impact this has on their reading success.

The results of the present study provided information pertaining to each of the following questions:

1. Is there an association between a read-aloud program implemented in the child's home and the improvement of reading achievement?
2. Is there an association between a read-aloud program implemented in the school and the improvement of reading achievement?
3. Is there an association between a read-aloud program implemented at home, and the improvement of reading achievement according to gender?
4. Is there an association between a read-aloud program implemented at school, and the improvement of reading achievement according to gender?

5. Is there an association between a read-aloud program implemented at home, and the improvement of reading achievement according to family structure?

6. Is there an association between a read-aloud program implemented at school, and the improvement of reading achievement according to family structure?

7. Is there an association between the read-aloud program implemented at school, and the improvement of reading achievement according to perception of family?

Composite Null Hypothesis

Each null hypothesis was tested at the .05 level of significance.

1. The differences among the adjusted post-mean Science Research Associates (S.R.A.) scores according to the type of reading activity for those who participated in the read-aloud program, and those who did not, will not be statistically significant (employing pretest scores as the covariate measure).

2. The differences among the adjusted post-mean Science Research Associates (S.R.A.) scores according to gender for those who participated in the school read-aloud program will not be statistically significant (employing pretest scores as the covariate measure).

3. The differences among the adjusted post-mean Science Research Associates (S.R.A.) scores according to gender who participated in the home read-aloud program will not be statistically significant (employing pretest scores as the covariate measure).

4. The differences among the adjusted post-mean Science Research Associates (S.R.A.) scores according to family structure for those who participated in the school read-aloud program will not be statistically significant (employing pretest scores as the covariate measure).

5. The differences among the adjusted post-mean Science Research Associates (S.R.A.) scores according to family structure for those who participated in the home read-aloud program will not be statistically significant (employing pretest scores as the covariate measure).

6. The differences among the adjusted post-mean Science Research Associates (S.R.A.) scores according to perception of family for those who participated in the school read-aloud program will not be statistically significant (employing pretest scores as the covariate measure).

Definition of Variables

Independent Variables

The independent variables were:

1. Group membership - two levels:
   Level 1- children who were read to for 20 minutes daily, 4 days a week, by the researcher, for a period of 10 weeks;
   Level 2 - children who participated in a read-aloud program at home for 20 minutes daily, 4 days a week, for a period of 10 weeks, and
   Level 3 - children who were in the control group which received no additional reading activity.
2. Gender - two levels:
   Level 1- male, and
   Level 2 - female.
3. Family Structure - two levels:
   Level 1- intact family, and
   Level 2 - all others.
4. Perception of Family - two levels:

Level 1- score of 15 positive words on Parrish's Personal Attribute Inventory for Children, Perception of Family checklist, and

Level 2 - a score of 14 or less positive words on Parrish's Personal Attribute Inventory for Children, Perception of Family checklist.

Dependent Variables

The following reading scores from the Science Research Associates Test (S.R.A) were the dependent variables for the study:

Reading Vocabulary,

Reading Comprehension, and

Reading Total.

Covariate Measure

Scores from the Science Research Associates (S.R.A.) test which were administered during April, 1991 were used as covariate measures. The following sub-scales were employed.

Reading Vocabulary,

Reading Comprehension, and

Reading Total.

Limitations

The following might have affected the results of the present study:

1. the sample was not random,
2. the sample came from a single school,
3. sample size,
4. self reported perception of family, and
5. the parents kept own record of home read-aloud time

Methodology

Setting

Stockton has a population of approximately 1,900. The enrollment at the elementary school at the time of the study was 270 students, with two classrooms of each grade. The Stockton District is one of the major employers of the town, with a total of 74 faculty and staff being employed. The elementary school, from which the subjects came, employs 33 faculty members. Stockton is a small, rural, agriculture-based community. Many of the families depend upon agriculture or its related activities for income. One industry in Stockton that is not related to agriculture is the minimum security prison that houses inmates who are due for release in a short time. In addition, Stockton has several businesses in its downtown, some of which are family owned and seem to provide stable services, and are an important part of the community.

Subjects

The subjects used in the read-aloud program were students in grade four at Stockton Grade School in Stockton, Kansas. Students from two fourth grade classes made up the sample. Each class contained 22 children. One of the children was unable to participate in the study due to the fact that he was new in the Stockton School system, and had not previously been tested with the S.R.A. tests. The 43 children were divided into 3 groups, one group being a school read-aloud group, the second being a home-read aloud group, and the third being a control group with no additional reading.

At the beginning of the study, a letter was sent to all parents with fourth grade children. This letter explained the purpose of the study and how it would be implemented. (see Appendix A). Also included with the initial letter explaining the project was a form for the parents to complete designating

their preference of group in which their child would participate. The choices given were: 1) The researcher reading aloud to the child for 20 minutes a day, 4 days a week, for the school read-aloud group, 2) the child being read-aloud to by an adult at home, for the home read-aloud group and 3) a control group in which there was no additional reading. It was the intent of the researcher for each group to contain an equal number of students, but that was not possible, because the parents had the opportunity to decide to which of the three groups their child would belong.

Of the 44 survey preference forms sent out, 36 were returned to the researcher by the due date. Before placing the children in any of the three groups, the researcher made contact with several of the parents who requested the school-read aloud group, to make sure the parents understood the commitment that was involved by having their children participate in the school read-aloud group. Some of the parents felt so strongly about having their child participate in the school read-aloud group, it was necessary to make special arrangements in the morning to get the child to school on time, since their child normally rode the bus. Of the 36 forms that were returned, 20 parents requested that their child be a member of the school read-aloud group. Sixteen of these requests were granted, and their children were placed in the school read-aloud group. It was not possible for the remaining four who requested their children be members of the school read-aloud group because their children rode the bus to school in the morning, and special arrangements could not be made for transportation so the children would arrive at school by 8:00 each morning. The researcher made contact with each of these parents, and asked if it was their desire to have their child placed in the home read-aloud group, or the control group. Two parents chose the home read-aloud group, the other two chose the control group.

Six parents requested that their children be members of the home read-aloud group. All six of these requests were granted, and their child was placed in the home read-aloud group. The researcher realized that it was a must for the members of the home read-aloud group to have motivated parents, and these six parents met this criteria. Eleven parents had no preference which read-aloud group their child was placed, but they did want to be a part of one or the other. The researcher placed these 11 children into either the school read-aloud group, or the home read-aloud group. Some of the children rode the bus to school in the morning, so they were members of the home read-aloud group. Other parents decided the home read-aloud group would be a better choice for their children, because of the 8:00 beginning time of the school read-aloud group. Only one parent whose survey form was returned had no desire for their child to participate, and wished for her to be a member of the control group. The seven children who did not return the survey forms were placed in the control group, since it was not possible to be in one of the read-aloud groups without parental permission. The school read-aloud group had 19 members, the home read-aloud group had 14 members, and the control group contained 10 members.

Included in the sample were two sets of twins and two other families who had both a boy and a girl in fourth grade. One set of twins was placed in the home read-aloud group, the other in the school read-aloud group. Both sets of parents who had both a boy and a girl in fourth grade requested that their children be members of the school read-aloud group, and their requests were granted.

Instrumentation

All of the students who participated in this study were administered three instruments. The instruments administered were The Science Research

Associates Test (S.R.A.), Perception of Family instrument (Parrish's Personal Attribute Inventory Children - P.A.I.C.) and a Demographic Sheet.

The S.R.A. test generated three scores: a Reading Vocabulary score, a Reading Comprehension score, and a Reading Total score. The Reading Vocabulary portion of the test consisted of 40 test items, the Reading Comprehension portion of the test 50 items, and a Reading Total of 90 items.

The reliability of the three sub-scales of reading on the S.R.A. test was determined by employing an alternate form reliability procedure. The sample consisted of 871 fourth graders. The alternate form reliability coefficients were the following: Reading Vocabulary .76, Reading Comprehension .76, and reading total .84 ("S.R.A. Survey," 1985).

The scales employed had the following factor loading with the composite score: Reading Vocabulary .87, Reading Comprehension .71, and Reading total .93. The inter-correlation coefficient among the 3 scales were Reading Vocabulary with Reading Comprehension .82, Reading Vocabulary with Reading total .95, and Reading Comprehension with Reading total .96.

The Perception of Family instrument contained 48 items. The students were asked to identify 15 words which they felt best described their family. Parrish and Taylor, (1978a) reported the following test/retest reliability coefficients for the Personal Attribute Inventory for Children (P.A.I.C.):

all males	.73
third grade males	.62
sixth grade males	.87
all females	.71
third grade females	.53
sixth grade females	.80
all third graders	.61
all sixth graders	.83

All test/retest reliability co-efficients were statistically significant at the .05 level. Parrish and Taylor (1978b) also reported the following test/retest reliability co-efficients on the P.A.I.C. (self-concept):

3rd grade	.76
4th grade	.79
5th grade	.63
6th grade	.61
7th grade	.75
8th grade	.98
Total	.88

All reliability co-efficients were significant at the .05 level.

A Demographic Sheet was developed by the researcher. It contained four items of information. It included the child's name, gender, family structure, and the group in which the child took part for the implementation of the study. (see Appendix N).

Design

A pretest/posttest three group design was employed. The independent variables investigated were: type of instruction, gender, family structure, and perception of family. The dependent variables were scores from the Reading Vocabulary scale, the Reading Comprehension scale, and the Reading Total scale from the S.R.A. test. Six composite null hypothesis were tested. A pretest/posttest design was employed with each composite null hypothesis. A single factor analysis of covariance was employed with each composite null hypothesis.

McMillan and Schumacher (1989) identified 10 threats to internal validity. The threats were dealt with in the following way in the present study:

1. history-a pretest/posttest control group design was employed;

2. selection-was violated in that random placement was not feasible; the researcher made some arbitrary decisions as to group placement;
3. statistical regression-was violated in that there were 3students who took part in the study who had extreme reading scores;
4. testing-covariant measures were employed;
5. instrumentation-did not pertain to the present study because standardized instruments and procedures were employed;
6. mortality-did not pertain to the present study because all subjects completed the study;
7. maturation-a pretest/posttest control group design was employed;
8. diffusion of treatment-the effect of diffusion of treatment was controlled by employing pretest/posttest control group design;
9. experimenter bias-did not pertain because standardized instruments were employed in the present study and type of treatment was an independent variable; and
10. statistical conclusion-the researcher did not project beyond the statistical procedures employed; however, one mathematical assumption, random placement, was violated.

Macmillan and Schumacher (1989) identified two threats to external validity. The threats were dealt with in the following ways:

1. population external validity-random placement was not employed and the sample was small; therefore, the results should be generalized to groups similar to the sample employed; and
2. ecological external validity-a pretest/posttest control group design was employed, diffusion of treatment was an independent variable and data were collected by using standardized instruments and procedures.

Implementation

After selection of the groups, the researcher contacted each child's parents by letter to inform them of the group in which their child would participate (see Appendixes B, C, and D). The researcher waited a week before beginning the project so parents could have time to think over their decision, because participation in either the home read-aloud group or the school read-aloud group required tremendous commitment on the part of the parents and children. During this week, handouts were prepared by the researcher for distribution to parents who had children participating in both the school read-aloud group and the home read-aloud group. The handout for the school read-aloud group consisted of information about the program, and where the group would be meeting each morning (see Appendix E). The packet of materials prepared for the home read-aloud group consisted of a list of recommended read-aloud books that would be appropriate to use for the project, and tips on reading aloud to their child. Also included in this packet of materials were weekly charts that were to be filled out each evening after the read-aloud session was held. The children were to return these charts to the researcher each Friday(see Appendix F).

The Friday before the read-aloud groups were to begin, the researcher sent home a short note to parents who had children participating in both the school read-aloud group and the home read-aloud group. The purpose of the letter was to remind them of the beginning date of September 30, 1991, and to thank them for their participation in the study (see Appendix G).

The school read-aloud group met each morning, Monday through Thursday, in the school cafeteria from 8:00 to 8:20. The cafeteria was chosen because of its large area, and because it is roomy enough to allow the children to lounge comfortably. The group congregated in a corner of the cafeteria where there was a large area rug spread on the floor. The children were

allowed to sit or lie on the rug. The children were always quite absorbed in the book, so there was really not a problem with them being so comfortable they did not pay attention to the story. The researcher also sat on the floor in the reading circle with the children. The purpose of sitting on the floor with the children was so the researcher did not seem to be separated from the children. Also, it gave the researcher a chance to share the pictures in the book with the children as the story was read. On occasion, the children sat at the lunch tables just for a change of pace. Located in the area of the reading circle was a moveable bulletin board. This bulletin board contained seasonal displays that coincided with the reading activity. After each session, the children marked their progress on the progress chart that was located on the bulletin board. During the 10 weeks that the school read-aloud group met, the researcher finished three books (see Appendix O).

The researcher met with the children in the home read-aloud group each Friday. At this Friday meeting, the children handed in their weekly reading charts and filled in their spaces on the progress chart. This Friday gathering was also an opportunity for the children to have contact with each other and to discuss the different books that they were being read.

To maintain open communication during the study, letters were sent out twice during the implementation of the reading groups. The letters were to thank the parents for having their children participate in the program, and to remind them of the importance of sticking with the program until its ending date (see appendixes I, J, K, and L).

Data Collecting Procedures

The following steps were implemented in data collecting:

1. preparing data sheet,

2. locating and recording S.R.A. reading scores from previous year (covariate measures),
3. administering Parish instrument and Demographic sheet,
4. administering S.R.A. reading test following last read-aloud sessions, and
5. completing data sheet for main frame computer analysis.

Research Procedure

The research project was implemented in 12 steps:

1. topic selected
2. reviewing the related literature,
3. selection of the instrument,
4. selection of the grade level that would participate in the study,
5. writing the research proposal,
6. selection of children participating in each of the three groups,
7. defending the research proposal,
8. implementation of the study,
9. administering the posttest to the participating students,
10. analyzing the data,
11. defend the final thesis, and
12. final editing of the thesis

Data Analysis

The following were compiled:

1. appropriate descriptive statistics,
2. one-way analysis of covariance,
3. homogeniety of regression, and
4. least squared test of means.

Results

The purpose of the researcher was to investigate the effects of a read-aloud program and its impact on fourth grade students. Type of instruction, gender, family structure and perception of family were the independent variables investigated. The dependent variables were Reading Vocabulary, Reading Comprehension, and Reading Total from the Science Research and Associates test (S.R.A.). Six composite null hypotheses were tested. A pretest/posttest design was employed with each composite null hypothesis. A single factor analysis of covariance was used to test each composite null hypothesis. The result section was organized according to composite null hypotheses for ease of reference. Information pertaining to each composite null hypothesis was presented in a common format for ease of comparison.

It was hypothesized in composite null hypothesis number one that the differences among the adjusted post-mean Science Research Associates (S.R.A.) scores according to the type of reading activity for those who participated in the read-aloud program, and those who did not, would not be statistically significant (employing pretest scores as the covariate measure). Information pertaining to composite null hypothesis number one was presented in Table 1. The following information was cited in Table 1: variables, sample sizes, pretest means, pretest standard deviations, posttest means, posttest standard deviations, adjusted posttest means, F values, and p levels.

Table 1

A comparison of adjusted posttest mean Science Research Associates (S.R.A.) test reading scores according to types of group membership employing a one-way analysis of covariance.

Variable	n	Pre* m	Pre S	Post m	Post S	Adjusted Post M	F value	p level
Reading Vocabulary ***								
Group Membership**								
Group 1	19	28.6	5.44	28.9	6.85	29.1[a]		
Group 2	14	29.9	2.92	21.7	4.87	26.6	6.55	.0035
Group 3	10	27.8	5.39	22.1	7.53	23.2[b]		
	Homogeneity of Regression						1.05	.3610
Reading Comprehension								
Group Membership								
Group 1	19	27.4	5.54	34.5	8.26	34.3		
Group 2	14	28.2	4.25	33.1	5.02	32.1	1.10	.3435
Group 3	10	25.1	8.71	28.9	11.82	30.7		
	Homogeneity of Regression						0.18	.8380
Reading Total								
Group Membership								
Group 1	19	55.5	9.78	63.4	13.91	63.7[a]		
Group 2	14	58.1	6.57	60.9	9.46	58.1	4.69	.0150
Group 3	10	52.9	13.53	50.1	20.13	53.4[b]		
	Homogeneity of Regression						0.07	.9316

* The larger the score, the greater the achievement.

** Group 1 = school read-aloud group, Group 2 = home read-aloud group and Group 3 = control group.

*** Possible scores for the three components respectively are: 40, 50 and 90.

[ab] Difference statistically significant at the .05 level according to least squares means.

Two of the 3 p values were statistically significant at the .05 level; therefore, the null hypotheses for these comparisons were rejected. The significant comparisons were for the dependent variables Reading Vocabulary and Reading Total. The results in Table 1 indicated those who participated in the school read-aloud program had significantly higher achievement than those in the control group. The assumption of homogeneity of regression was met.

It was hypothesized in composite null hypothesis number two that the differences among the adjusted post-mean S.R.A. scores according to gender for those who participated in the school read-aloud program would not be statistically significant (employing pretest scores as the covariate measure). Information pertaining to composite null hypothesis number two was presented in Table 2. The following information was cited in Table 2: variables, sample sizes, pretest means, pretest standard deviations, posttest means, posttest standard deviations, adjusted posttest means, F values, and p levels.

Table 2

A Comparison of Adjusted Posttest Mean Science Research Associates (S.R.A.)Test Reading Scores According to Gender for Those who Participated in the School Read-Aloud Group Employing a One Way Analysis of Covariance.

Variable	n	Pre* m	Pre S	Post m	Post S	Adjusted Post M	F value	p level
Reading Vocabulary **								
Gender								
Boys	8	30.8	2.87	32.1	3.26	30.0	1.06	.3187
Girls	11	27.1	6.43	26.5	7.57	28.1		
Homogeneity of Regression							0.24	.6339
Reading Comprehension								
Gender								
Boys	8	28.0	4.14	36.9	7.30	36.3	0.97	.3397
Girls	11	26.9	6.53	32.8	8.82	33.2		
Homogeneity of Regression							0.15	.0765
Reading Total								
Gender								
Boys	8	58.8	6.73	69.0	9.27	65.6	0.71	..4133
Girls	11	53.1	11.21	59.4	15.66	61.8		
Homogeneity of Regression							0.26	.6206

* The larger the score, the greater the achievement.

** Possible scores for the three components respectively are: 40, 50, and 90.

None of the 3 p values was statistically significant at the .05 level; therefore, the null hypotheses for these comparisons were retained. The information cited in Table 2 indicated no associations between gender and reading achievement. The assumption homogeneity of regression was met.

It was hypothesized in composite null hypothesis number three that the differences among the adjusted post-mean S.R.A. scores according to gender for those who participated in the home read-aloud program would not be statistically significant (employing pretest scores as the covariate measure). Information pertaining to composite null hypothesis number three was presented in Table 3. The following information was cited in Table 3: variables, sample sizes, pretest means, pretest standard deviations, posttest means, posttest standard deviations, adjusted posttest means, F values, and p levels.

Table 3

A Comparison of Adjusted Posttest Mean Science Research Associates (S.R.A.) Test Reading Scores According to Gender for Those Who Participated in the Home Read-Aloud Group Employing a One-Way Analysis of Covariance.

Variable	n	Pre* m	Pre S	Post m	Post S	Adjusted Post M	F value	p level
Reading Vocabulary **								
Gender								
Boys	7	30.6	3.21	28.0	5.10	27.0	1.03	.3316
Girls	7	29.3	2.69	27.4	5.03	28.4		
Homogeneity of Regression							0.07	.7985
Reading Comprehension								
Gender								
Boys	7	30.7	2.14	33.3	6.32	30.7	3.63	.0833
Girls	7	25.7	4.46	33.0	3.83	35.6		
Homogeneity of Regression							9.85	.0105
Reading Total								
Gender								
Boys	7	61.3	4.92	61.3	11.07	56.7[a]	8.16	.0156
Girls	7	55.0	6.81	60.4	8.42	65.0[b]		
Homogeneity of Regression							4.83	.0527

* The larger the score, the greater the achievement.

** Possible scores for the three components respectively are: 40, 50, and 90.

[ab] Difference statistically significant at the .05 level according to least squares means.

One of the 3 p values was statistically significant at the .05 level; therefore, the null hypothesis for this comparison was rejected. The significant comparison was for the dependent variable Reading Total score. The results cited in Table 3 indicated girls who participated in the home read-aloud group had a significantly larger Reading Total mean score than boys. The assumption homogeneity of regression was not met for the dependent variables Reading Comprehension and Reading Total.

It was hypothesized in composite null hypothesis number four that the differences among the adjusted post-mean S.R.A. scores according to family structure for those who participated in the school read-aloud program would not be statistically significant (employing pretest scores as the covariate measure). Information pertaining to composite null hypothesis number four was presented in Table 4. The following information was cited in Table 4: variables, sample sizes, pretest means, pretest standard deviations, posttest means, posttest standard deviations, adjusted posttest means, F values, and p levels.

Table 4

A Comparison of Adjusted Posttest Mean Science Research Associates (S.R.A.) Test Reading Scores According to Family Structure for Those Who Participated in the Home Read-Aloud Group Employing a One-Way Analysis of Covariance.

Variable	n	Pre* m	Pre S	Post m	Post S	Adjusted Post M	F value	p level
Reading Vocabulary **								
Family Structure								
Intact	11	29.5	5.79	28.6	6.96	27.7	2.88	.1091
Other	8	27.5	5.07	29.3	7.15	30.5		
Homogeneity of Regression							0.54	.4725
Reading Comprehension								
Family Structure								
Intact	11	27.7	5.41	35.0	6.68	34.7	0.01	.9146
Other	8	26.9	6.06	33.9	10.52	34.3		
Homogeneity of Regression							0.20	.6633
Reading Total								
Family Structure								
Intact	11	57.2	9.90	63.6	11.83	61.7	0.90	.3579
Other	8	53.1	9.76	63.1	17.26	65.8		
Homogeneity of Regression							0.08	.7816

* The larger the score, the greater the achievement.

** Possible scores for the three components respectively are: 40, 50, and 90.

None of the 3 p values was statistically significant at the .05 level; therefore, the null hypotheses for these comparisons were retained. The results cited in Table 4 indicated no association between family structure and the dependent variables. The assumption homogeneity of regression was met.

It was hypothesized in composite null hypothesis number five that the differences among the adjusted post-mean S.R.A. scores according to family structure for those who participated in the home read-aloud program would not be statistically significant (employing pretest scores as the covariate measure). Information pertaining to composite null hypothesis number five was presented in Table 5. The following information was cited in Table 5: variables, sample sizes, pretest means, pretest standard deviations, posttest means, posttest standard deviations, adjusted posttest means, F values, and p levels.

Table 5

A Comparison of Adjusted Posttest Means Science Research Associates (S.R.A.) Test Reading Scores According to Family Structure for Those Who Participated in the Home Read-Aloud Group Employing a One-Way Analysis of Covariance.

Variable	n	Pre* m	Pre S	Post m	Post S	Adjusted Post M	F value	p level
Reading Vocabulary **								
Family Structure								
Intact	11	29.8	3.25	27.4	4.97	27.5	0.29	.6029
Other	3	30.3	1.53	29.0	5.29	28.4		
Homogeneity of Regression							1.97	.1905
Reading Comprehension								
Family Structure								
Intact	11	27.8	4.75	33.4	4.95	33.7	0.68	.4264
Other	3	29.7	0.58	32.3	6.35	31.3		
Homogeneity of Regression							1.44	.2583
Reading Total								
Family Structure								
Intact	11	57.6	7.37	60.7	9.46	61.3	0.27	.6114
Other	3	60.0	1.73	61.3	11.59	59.2		
Homogeneity of Regression							1.14	.3108

* The larger the score, the greater the achievement.

** Possible scores for the three c omponents respectively are: 40, 50 and 90.

None of the 3 p values was statistically significant at the .05 level; therefore, the null hypotheses for these comparisons were retained. The results cited in Table 5 indicated no association between family structure and the dependent variable. The assumption of homogeneity of regression was met.

It was hypothesized in composite null hypothesis number six that the differences among the adjusted post-mean S.R.A. scores according to perception of family for those who participated in the school read-aloud program would not be statistically significant (employing pretest scores as the covariate measure). Information pertaining to composite null hypothesis number six was cited in Table 6. The following information was cited in Table 6: variables, sample sizes, pretest means, pretest standard deviations, posttest means, posttest standard deviations, adjusted posttest means, F values, and p levels.

Table 6

A Comparison of Adjusted Posttest Mean Science Research Associates (S.R.A.) Test Reading Scores According to Perception of Family for Those Who Participated in the School Read-Aloud Group Employing a One-Way Analysis of Covariance.

Variable	n	Pre* m	Pre S	Post m	Post S	Adjusted Post M	F value	p level
Reading Vocabulary **								
Perception of Family***								
Level 1	13	29.1	4.87	29.5	6.35	29.0	0.02	.8814
Level 2	6	27.7	6.92	27.7	8.33	28.7		
Homogeneity of Regression							0.37	.5544
Reading Comprehension								
Perception of Family								
Level 1	13	27.8	5.57	34.1	8.02	33.6	0.71	.4119
Level 2	6	26.3	5.85	35.5	9.46	36.5		
Homogeneity of Regression							0.41	.5337
Reading Total								
Perception of Family								
Level 1	13	56.2	9.58	63.5	13.21	62.8	0.19	.6705
Level 2	6	54.0	10.97	63.2	16.68	64.8		
Homogeneity of Regression							0.54	.4757

* The larger the score, the greater the achievement.

** Possible scores for the three components respectively are: 40, 50 and 90.

*** Level 1=a score of 15 positive words from Parrish's Personal Attribute Inventory Children (P.A.I.C.) which has a possible score of 15.
Level 2=a score of 14 positive words or less from Parrish's Personal Attribute Inventory Children.

None of the 3 p_values was statistically significant at the .05 level, therefore the null hypothesis for these comparisons were retained. The results cited in Table 6 indicated no association between Perception of Family and the dependent variable. The assumption of homogeneity of regression was met.

Discussion

The purpose of the researcher was to investigate the effects of a read-aloud program and its impact on fourth grade students. The independent variables investigated were: type of instruction, gender, family structure, and perception of family. The dependent variables were Reading Vocabulary, Reading Comprehension, and Reading Total from the Science Research Associates (S.R.A.) test. Six composite null hypotheses were tested. A pretest/posttest design and a one-way analysis of covariance was employed with each composite null hypothesis. The sample consisted of 43 students from the fourth grade classes at Stockton Grade School. The school read-aloud group consisted of 19 children; 14 children participated in the home read-aloud group, and there were 10 children in the control group.

A total of 18 comparisons were made. The comparisons were for main effects. Of the 18 comparisons made, 3 were statistically significant at the .05 level. The significant comparisons were the following: school read-aloud group and Reading Vocabulary, school read-aloud group and Reading Total, and gender and Total Score for the home group. The results of the significant main effects indicated the following:

1. Those who participated in the school read-aloud group had significantly higher scores than the control group for the dependent variable Reading Vocabulary.

2. Those who participated in the school read-aloud group had significantly higher scores than the control group for the dependent variable Reading Total.
3. Girls who participated in the home read-aloud program had significantly higher achievement for the dependent variable Reading Total.

The results of the present study appeared to support the findings of Meter (1990) that a read-aloud program implemented in the elementary school does have a significant impact on children and their reading achievement. The present study also supported Trelease (1989a) and Gatheral (1981) that reading aloud by professional teachers was found to be associated with reading academic success for children.

The researcher found that parents were an important part of a successful read-aloud program. Trelease (1989a), Menzoda, (1985), and Durkin (as cited in Allington, 1980) also found this to be true. These authors found that given proper guidance and support, parents could improve students' reading performance by reading aloud to their children on a regular basis.

The results of the present study appeared to support the following generalizations:

1. Participants in a read-aloud program who are read to by a teacher at school benefitted more from a read-aloud program than the control group,
2. girls read-aloud to by parents achieved more than boys,
3. no association between a read-aloud program implemented in the child's home and reading achievement,
4. no association between gender and reading achievement in a read-aloud program implemented at school,
5. no association between family structure and reading achievement in a read-aloud program implemented at home or school, and

6. no association between perception of family and a read-aloud program implemented at school.

Educational Implications

The results of the present study supported the idea that reading aloud is beneficial to children and their future success in reading. However, for this reading aloud to be most effective, it should be implemented by a teacher.

The results of the present study appear to support the following recommendations:

1. The study should be replicated with large random samples,
2. the study should be replicated using children from different grade levels.
3. the study should be replicated using children from more than one school, and
4. the study should be replicated with older children reading to younger children and vice-versa.

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Appendix A:

Initial Parent Letter About the Study

September 13, 1991

Dear Parents,

This semester I am in the process of completing my Master's Degree in Elementary Counseling through Fort Hays State University. I am working under the supervision of Dr. Bill Daley. The completion of this degree requires a written research paper on the topic of my choice, called a thesis. For this thesis, I wanted to choose a topic that would be beneficial to the students at Stockton Grade School. I have decided to concentrate this project on a read-aloud program.

In this study I will find the effect that 20 minutes of daily read-aloud time at home has on the reading achievement of our students. I will also find the effect that 20 minutes of daily read-aloud time at school has on the reading achievement of our students.

I will be dividing the students in the 4th grade into three groups. One group will be read to for 20 minutes a day, four days a week, by parents for the home read-aloud group. Another group will be read to for 20 minutes a day, four days a week by myself for the school read-aloud group. The third group will have no additional read-aloud time other than what is already taking place in their individual classes. This will be the control group. Participation in this project will not have an effect on your child's reading grade in school.

The study will last for 10 weeks. After the 10 week period, I will test the students in each of the three groups to find the differences in their reading achievement.

In order for this project to be successful, I am asking for your assistance. I need your children to participate in this program. Please fill out the form on the following page giving your consent for participation. If you definitely have a preference for which of the three groups your child will be in, please note that at the bottom of the page. Please have your child return the form by next Tuesday, September 17. I will be in contact with you sometime the following week to notify you of the group in which your child will be participating.

Thank you very much for helping me with this project. I am anticipating things to work out well. I am eager to see the results that the read-aloud programs will have on the reading achievement of your children.

Kelli Wright,

Kelli Wright

4TH GRADE READ-ALOUD PROGRAM

FALL 1991

I give consent for my child, _____ to
(your child's name)
participate in the read-aloud program being implemented this fall by fourth grade teacher, Kelli Wright.

_____
(your name)

* *

* *

I understand that my child may be placed in any of the three groups, but my preference would be:

_____ 20 minutes of reading four days a week for the ten-week period by Kelli Wright. (School read-aloud group)

_____ 20 minutes of reading four days a week for the ten-week period by a parent at home. (Home read-aloud group)

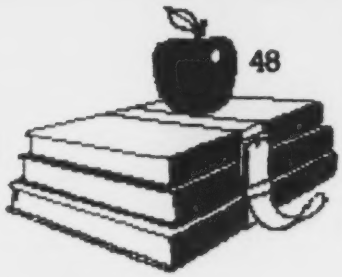
_____ I do not wish any extra reading for my child. (Control group)

Thank you very much for your cooperation. If you have any questions concerning this project, please feel free to contact me. My home phone number is 425-6637. Please return this form to me by Tuesday, Sept. 17.

Kelli Wright

Appendix B:

Parent Letter to School Read-Aloud Group



September 20, 1991

Dear _____,

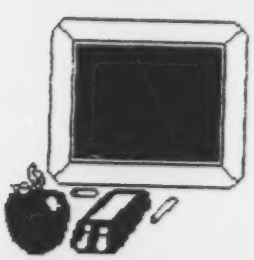
Thanks so much for your enthusiasm regarding the read-aloud program I am implementing in the 4th grade. I have studied the forms that each of you filled out earlier this week, and the groups have been decided.

_____ will be a member of the school read-aloud group. This reading group will begin on Monday, September 30. We will meet in the school cafeteria, and will meet four days a week, Monday through Thursday. We will not meet on Fridays. Your child will need to be at school ready to read by 7:55.

For this project to be successful, it takes a tremendous commitment from all people involved. Your child's attendance at each read-aloud session is very important. Of course, there are always emergencies that arise, or illnesses that we cannot control, this is understandable. But, if you feel that the starting time of 8:00 a.m. will put to much of a strain on your morning routine, please let me know as soon as possible so I can re-arrange the groups.

The program will last 10 weeks, ending during the first week of December. Once the read-aloud group begins, I believe your child will enjoy it, and will want to be there for each session.

I am very excited to begin the reading group, and I hope your child is also. Thank you very much for allowing your child to participate in this project. I am anticipating things to run smoothly. If you have any questions about the read-aloud program, please feel free to contact me or stop by after school to see me. I would be happy to visit with you. The results from this study should be available shortly before Christmas vacation.

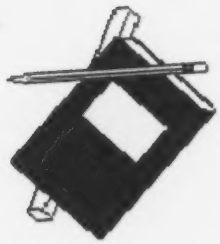


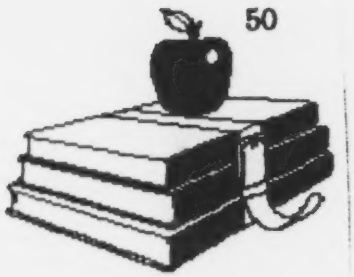
Thanks again,

Kelli Wright

Appendix C:

Parent Letter to Home Read-Aloud Group





September 20, 1991

Dear _____,

Thanks for much for your enthusiasm regarding the read-aloud groups I am implementing in the fourth grade. I have studied the forms that each of you filled out earlier this week, and the groups have been decided.

_____ will be a member of the home read-aloud group. This group requires that YOU read-aloud to your child. The program will begin on September 30, and run for 10 weeks, concluding during the first week in December.

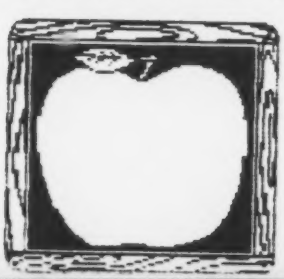
For this project to be successful, it does take a tremendous commitment from all people involved. If you feel that you will not be able to read aloud to your child for 20 minutes a day, four days a week, please contact me and let me know as soon as possible so I can do some re-arranging. This read-aloud time can be a very special time between you and your child. Also, if you have other children, this would be an excellent time to begin reading aloud to them also.

Next week, I will be sending a packet home with your child explaining the home read-aloud group. Included in this packet will be some pointers on reading aloud, and some books that you might wish to choose from when reading to your child. I will also include a weekly chart that you and your child can fill out each evening after completing the 20 minutes of read-aloud time.

After the September 30 beginning date, I will be meeting with your children each Friday so that they can turn in their weekly charts. This will be a time that I can visit with each child and they can express their feelings toward the read-aloud time.

I believe that once you get into the routine, your child will enjoy this special read-aloud time very much. Some of you may already practice this at home, if you do, I commend you. Research says that read-aloud time will help children and will improve their reading achievement in the years to come.

Thank you very much for participating in this project. I am looking forward to working with you and your child. If you have any questions about the read-aloud program, please feel free to call me at home, or stop by my room after school. The results from this study should be available shortly before Christmas vacation, and I would be more than happy to share them with you.

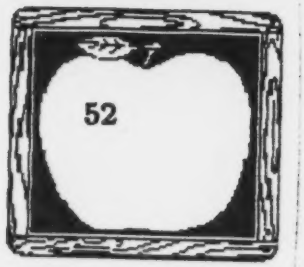


Thanks again,

Kelli Wright

Appendix D:

Parent Letter to Control Group



September 20, 1991

Dear Parents,

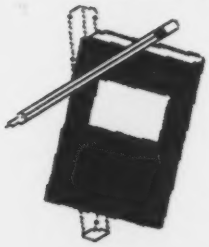
Thanks so much for the interest shown in the read-aloud groups that I am implementing in the fourth grade. I have studied the forms that you filled out at the beginning of this week, and the groups have been decided.

_____ will be a member of the control group. This means that your child will not have to do any extra reading to belong to this group. They will not receive any extra read-aloud time other than what is already going on in their classroom. This was a very difficult decision to make in some instances. Since we are having the school read-aloud group in the mornings, it was very difficult to place children who ride the bus in this group. Also, for the children who did not return a slip, it was not possible for them to participate with out parental permission.

Being in the control group does have a very important significance, even though the children do not receive any additional read-aloud time. This group will be the basis on which I measure the other groups, to see if the additional read-aloud time had an impact on their reading success.

This study will run for 10 weeks. We will end sometime during the first week of December. The results will be available for you to view sometime shortly before Christmas vacation.

Thank-you for your time. If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to call me at home, or stop by my classroom after school. I will be happy to visit with you.



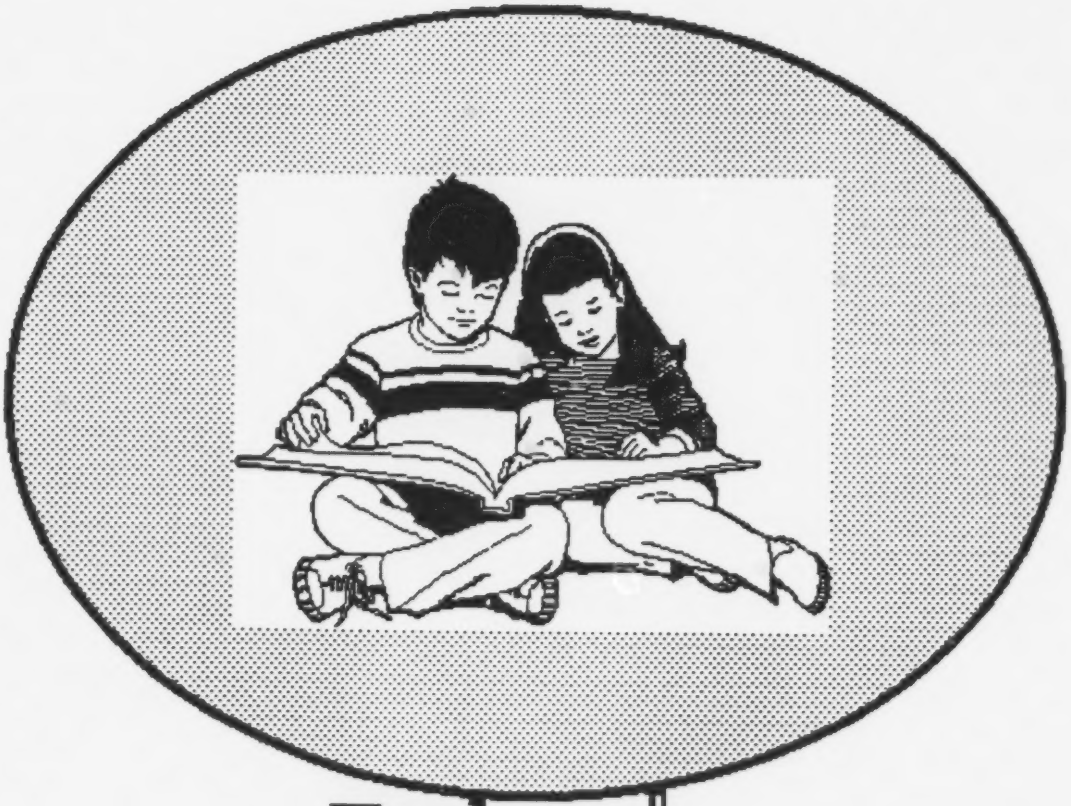
Thanks again,

Kelli Wright

Appendix E:

School Read-Aloud Group, Pamphlet

Project R.E.A.D.



School Read-Aloud Group

Fall 1991

September 24, 1991

Dear Parents,

Thanks again for allowing your child to participate in the school read-aloud group that is being implemented as part of the read-aloud program in the fourth grade.

Please keep in mind that we will begin the program on Monday, September 30, 1991. As I mentioned before, your child will need to be at school by at least 7:55 so that they may do their morning preparations, and be ready to read by 8:00. I have not heard from any of you this week about conflicts that this starting time may have with your morning routine, so I am assuming that everything is set. If, for some reason, you have decided that you do not want your child in the school read-aloud group, PLEASE contact me immediately.

As I have mentioned before, this is a big committment that you and your child have decided to pursue. However, if my study supports the research, your child's reading achievement should show an improvement, partly because of their participation in a read-aloud group.

I am very excited to be working with your child, and I hope that they are looking forward to participating in this project. I think once we get started and they see what is involved, they will look forward to each read-aloud session. I will be keeping you informed of our progress in our school read-aloud group, by sending out frequent letters. Also, if you have any questions or comments about the program, please feel free to contact me. I would be happy to chat with you.

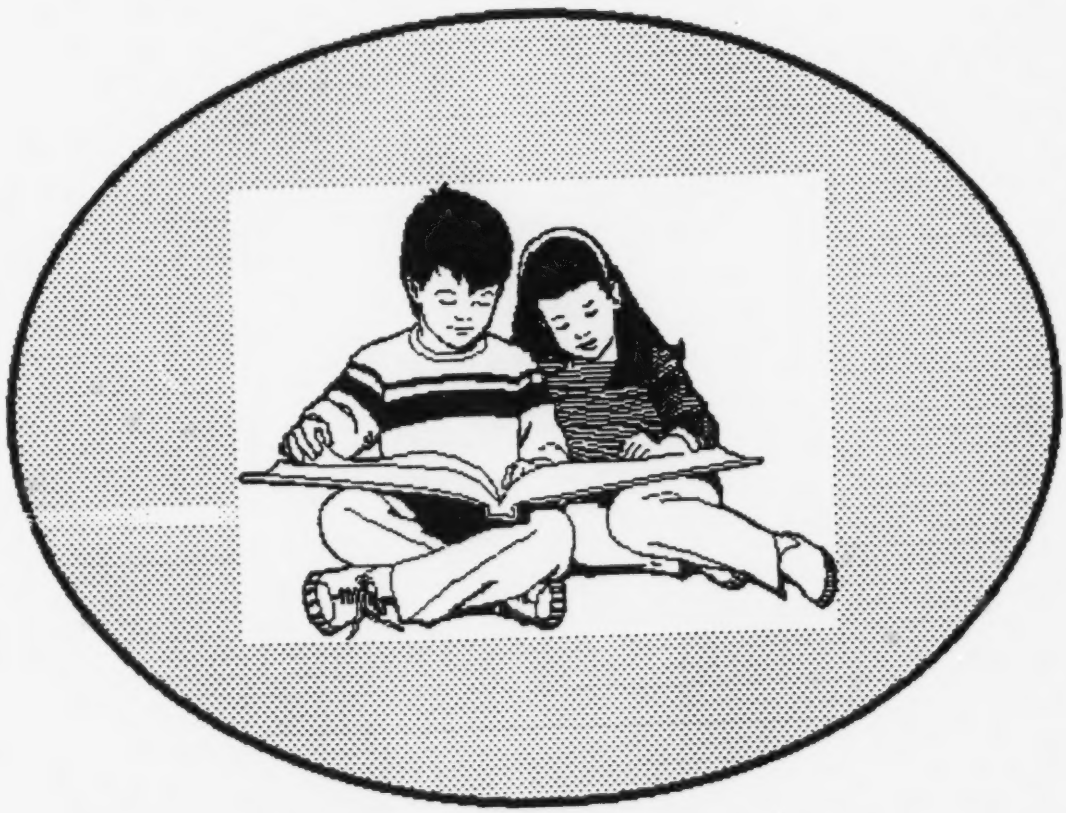
Thanks again,

Kelli Wright

Appendix F

Home Read-Aloud Group, Pamphlet

Project R.E.A.D.



Home Read-Aloud Group

Fall 1991

September 25, 1991

Dear Parents,

Thanks again for your participation in the home read-aloud group that is part of the reading project I am beginning in the fourth grade. As part of the home read-aloud group, you have a very challenging, yet rewarding task ahead of you for the next ten weeks.

Please keep in mind that the program will begin next Monday, September 30. As you know, your part of the program requires that you read aloud to your child for 20 minutes, four times a week, for the duration of the program. I have set the program up so that the reading be done on Monday through Thursday, with your child handing in their weekly chart on Friday. If however, you feel that it would work better for your schedule to read on Sunday through Wednesday, I see no problem. Or, if you want to schedule your reading on Sunday through Thursday, allowing yourself a day that you may skip whenever you have other commitments, I also see nothing wrong with this. Please feel free to experiment, but please do try to make sure that your child has the four days of home read-aloud time by Friday so that they may turn in their weekly charts.

I will be meeting with your child every Friday morning during the 10 weeks. At these Friday gatherings, your child will turn in their weekly read-aloud chart that you have filled out, and they will pick up another chart for the following week. They will also be filling in their progress chart. Your child does not need to come to school any earlier on Friday for these meetings, I will just meet with them for a few minutes before school begins.

On the following pages you will find some helpful hints that may be beneficial as you began reading to your child. Also, I have included a list of recommended read-aloud books that you may wish to consider when choosing your book. On the last page, you will find a weekly read-aloud chart. This will be the type of chart you and your child will be filling out after each read-aloud session.

If you have any questions during the program, please feel free to contact me. Also, if you have any comments about the program, I would be interested in hearing them.

Thanks again,

Kelli Wright

The following is a list of suggestions that you may find helpful when beginning your read-aloud sessions. Please do not feel that you must follow each of them, they are just tips that you may find beneficial.

1. Choose a book for the read-aloud time that you feel your child would enjoy. Even better-maybe you and your child could visit the library and choose a book together.

2. Don't select a book that your child has already heard or seen on television. Once the plot of a story is known, much of their interest has been lost.

3. Try to read books that will be above your child's intellectual level. Even though the book may seem too hard for them to read alone, they will be listening, and a child's listening ability is above their academic ability.

4. You may only finish 2 or 3 books during the 10 week period. That is O.K. The important part to remember is at least you've done that !!!!!

5. Try to set aside a routine time for the read-aloud session. It works best to choose the same time each day. However, if this is not possible, work it into your schedule the best you can.

6. Give the read-aloud book a fair chance. But, if after several sessions, (probably 2 or 3) you and your child don't like the book, and the book cannot keep his/her attention, (or yours), by all means, choose another book. Children will not sit still and listen to something in which they have no interest.

7. Pre-reading a book helps determine if the book is a good read-aloud. I realize this is not always possible. Perhaps after you have chosen a book, you can read a few pages ahead each evening after the read aloud session with your child. This prepares you for the next read-aloud session. Afterall, reading aloud well is not something that comes naturally. But, like everything else, practice always helps!!

8. Before you begin the read-aloud session each evening, allow your child a few minutes to settle down and adjust his mind to the story. Perhaps you could briefly discuss what has happened in the book during earlier read-aloud sessions.

9. Use plenty of expression when you read-aloud to your child. If possible, change your tone of voice to fit the dialogue.

10. Adjust your reading pace to fit the story. During a suspenseful part, slow down, and draw your words out to really capture the attention of your listener.

11. During the read-aloud time, position yourself, and your child somewhere that you are both comfortable.

12. The most common mistake in reading aloud is reading too fast. Read slowly enough for your child to build mental pictures of the story. But don't read so slowly that you loose his/her attention.

13. If your child has questions about the story while you are reading, take time to answer them. Sometimes the question will stick in his/her minds, and they won't be able to concentrate on anything else until it is answered.

14. If at all possible, have other adults read to your child. A male-figure is especially important. Most elementary teachers are female, so young children often relate reading with women.

15. Try to be an example to your child. If your children see that you are reading for pleasure during your spare time, maybe they will share the same enthusiasm for books.

16. The read-aloud time should be a special time between you and your child. After you have chosen a good book to read, and the routine has been established, I believe you and your child will look forward to each read-aloud session.

HAPPY READING !!!

RECOMMENDED READ-ALOUD BOOKS
HOME READ-ALOUD GROUP
FALL 1991

TITLE	AUTHOR
Be a Perfect Person in Just Three Days	Stephan Manes
The Best Christmas Pageant Ever	Barbara Robinson
Call it Courage	Armstrong Sperry
Chocolate Fever	Robert K. Smith
Help! I'm A Prisioner In The Library	Eth Clifford
The Hundred Dresses	Eleanor Estes
A Lion To Guard Us	Clyde Robert Bulla
Stone Fox	John R. Gardiner
The Velveteen Rabbit	Margery Williams
The Whipping Boy	Sid Fleischmann
Bridge to Terabithia	Katheine Paterson
The Call of the Wild	Jack London
Charlotte's Web	E.B. White
The Chocolate Touch	Patrick Skene Catling
Danny the Champion of the World	Roald Dahl
Dear Mr. Henshaw	Beverly Cleary
From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler	E.L. Konigsburg

Gentle Ben	Walt Morey	62
The Incredible Journey	Sheila Burnford	
The Indian in the Cupboard	Lynne Reid Banks	
James and the Giant Peach	Roald Dahl	
The Midnight Fox	Betsy Byars	
Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of Nimh	Robert C. O'Brien	
My Side of the Mountain	Jean George	
Old Yeller	Fred Gipson	
The Pinballs	Betsy Byars	
Ramona the Pest	Beverly Cleary	
Seven Alone	Honore Morrow	
The Trouble With Tuck	Theodore Taylor	
Tuck Everlasting	Natalie Babbitt	
The Wish Giver	Bill Britain	

* *

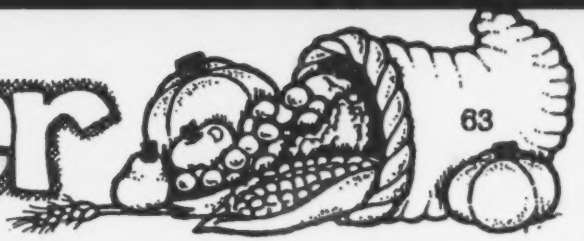
Other books that you may wish to consider:

The Boxcar Children — Gertrude Chandler Warner
(This is a series that may be read in any order)

On the Banks of Plum Creek — Laura Ingalls Wilder
(or any of the Laura Ingalls series)

Freckle Juice — Judy Blume
(or any of the books from this author)

November



Date	Title of Book	Pages read	Time read

Home Read-Aloud Group

Child's Name _____ Parent Signature _____

For the week of _____ _____

Please send this chart to school with your child each Friday so he/ she can fill in the progress chart.

Appendix G:

Letter Reminding of Beginning Date

Appendix H

Letter of Permission to Dr. Thomas Parish

Kelli B. Wright
511 North Cedar
Stockton, KS 67669
October 1, 1991

Dr. Thomas S. Parish
College of Education
Bluemont Hall
Kansas State University
Manhattan, KS

Dear Dr. Parish,

This semester I am in the process of completing my Master's Degree in Elementary Counseling through Fort Hays State University. I am working under the supervision of Dr. Bill Daley. For my thesis, I have decided to concentrate my studies on implementing read-aloud groups in the elementary school and finding the effect this has on reading achievement.

I am asking permission from you to use your Perception of Family sheet that has been designed for elementary students. I would like to use Perception of Family as an independent variable in my study. Could you please furnish me with a copy of your Perception of Family sheet, and also any information that you might have on its reliability and validity. Please let me know if there will be any cost in such items. I would be happy to reimburse you.

Thanks so much for time and I look forward to hearing from you in the near future.

Respectfully,

Kelli Wright

Kelli B. Wright

Appendix I

Five Week Letter to School Read-Aloud Group

November 4, 1991

Dear Parents,

It's hard to believe, but we are already halfway through the read-aloud program. The time has gone very quickly for me, and I hope it has for you also.

I have enjoyed having your children in the school read-aloud group. We have just recently finished our first book, Matilda, by Roald Dahl . The children enjoyed the book very much, as it was filled with quite a bit of humor. If they haven't filled you in already about the book, I'm sure they would be happy to do so. The second book that I have chosen for read-aloud is The Chocolate Touch, by Patrick Chilling. I hope that your children will enjoy this book as much as they enjoyed the first one.

I want to take this opportunity to commend you and your children on the fine efforts that you have made in order to make it to the read-aloud sessions on time each morning. So far, all 19 children have perfect attendance. I believe there is something to be said about this fine record.

Your children are all very fine young individuals, and I have been enjoying them very much. I hope the next five weeks of the program go as smoothly as the first five weeks did. Remember, if you have any questions or concerns anytime during the program, please let me know.

Thank you for your cooperation,

Kelli Wright

Appendix J

Five Week Letter to Home Read-Aloud Group

November 4, 1991

Dear Parents,

It's hard to believe, but the read-aloud program is half over. The first five weeks have gone by very quickly for me, and I hope it has for you also.

I hope you are enjoying the time that you and your child have together during the read-aloud time. I talked with some of you last month during Parent/Teacher Conferences, and you were all very excited about the program. Some of you mentioned that you have made the read-aloud time a family affair. This is an excellent idea if you have other children.

Our school read-aloud group has just finished its first book. I read the book, Matilda, by Roald Dahl outloud to this group. This same author wrote Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, which your children have all heard in their regular daily read-aloud by their teacher. The children enjoyed Matilda very much, as it contained much humor. I have loaned this book to one of the parents with a child in the home read-aloud group, because I felt the book was good enough to spread around. Perhaps this is a book you may wish to consider reading aloud to your child.

I want to take this opportunity to thank you for participating in the home read-aloud group. It takes a tremendous commitment on the part of you and your child to stick with this program until its ending date. You are all doing a very fine job, you are to be commended.

Remember, if you have any questions or concerns during the program, please let me know, I would be glad to visit with you.

Thank you for your cooperation,

Appendix K

Eight Week Letter to School Read-Aloud Group

November 22, 1991

Dear Parents,

Here we are, already finished with the eighth week of the read-aloud program. I cannot believe how quickly the time has gone. It seems like only yesterday we began.

I have enjoyed your children very much, and I hope they have also enjoyed being a member of the school read-aloud group. We are currently reading the book, "The Sign of the Beaver."

Next week, we will have reading on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday mornings only, because of Thanksgiving Vacation. The week following Thanksgiving Vacation, the school read-aloud group will **not** meet on Monday, December 2. This will probably be a rushed morning for everyone anyway, beings we have to get adjusted to a normal schedule again. Then, the week following that will be our last week for the school read-aloud group. That would be the week of December 9th through December 12th. I will be sending another note to remind everyone.

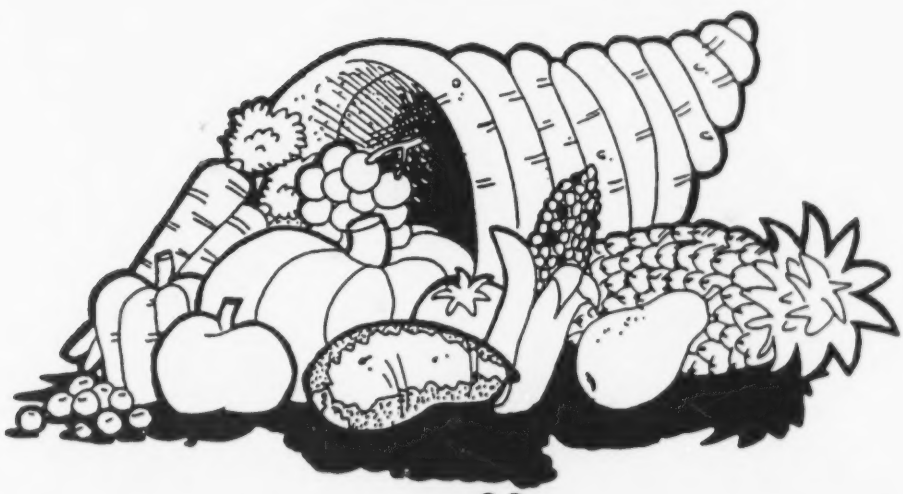
We still have many children in the school read-aloud group that have perfect attendance. This is just super. I want to thank both you and your children for making such a conscious effort to get to school early for these read-aloud sessions.

Thanks again for allowing your children to participate. I am eager, as I am sure you are, to find the effect that the read-aloud group has had on your child's reading achievement.

THANKS AGAIN,

Kelli Wright

Happy Thanksgiving



Appendix L

Eight Week Letter to Home Read-Aloud Group

November 22, 1991

Dear Parents,

Here we are, already finished with the eighth week of the read-aloud program. I cannot believe how quickly the time has gone. It seems like only yesterday that we began. I hope you have enjoyed the read-aloud time with your children. We have only two more weeks of the program to go, and then we will have completed the ten weeks.

Since next week is Thanksgiving week, you need only to read for two evenings. You may read whichever days you prefer. Some of you have been doing the read-aloud time on the weekends. Please feel free to continue, I know how hectic weeknights are. But, please send this chart to school next Wednesday with your child, so I can begin compiling some of the books that have been read, over Thanksgiving Vacation. My school read-aloud group has gotten behind in the reading sessions, because I have had several morning teacher meetings. We also were not able to have the reading group on the morning of Parent/Teacher Conferences, or on Halloween.

The week following Thanksgiving Vacation, December 9th through the 12th will be the last week of the read-aloud groups. I will be sending home another note sometime near the end of the program to tie up all the loose ends!!!

I am very eager, as I am sure you are, to find the effect that the read-aloud program has had on your child's reading achievement.

I want to again thank each and every one of you for your participation in this program. Without your help, the whole read-aloud program would not have been possible. You are all very dedicated parents!!!

Thanks again,

Kelli Wright

HAPPY THANKSGIVING

Appendix M

Perception of Family Questionnaire

The Personal Attribute Inventory for Children

Read through this list of words, then put an **X** in the box beside the **15** words which best describe your family.

- ☐ Afraid
- ☐ Angry
- ☐ Awkward
- ☐ Bad
- ☐ Beautiful
- ☐ Bitter
- ☐ Brave
- ☐ Calm
- ☐ Careless
- ☐ Cheerful
- ☐ Complaining
- ☐ Cowardly
- ☐ Cruel
- ☐ Dirty
- ☐ Dumb
- ☐ Fairminded
- ☐ Foolish
- ☐ Friendly
- ☐ Gentle
- ☐ Gloomy
- ☐ Good
- ☐ Great
- ☐ Greedy
- ☐ Handsome
- ☐ Happy
- ☐ Healthy
- ☐ Helpful
- ☐ Honest
- ☐ Jolly
- ☐ Kind
- ☐ Lazy
- ☐ Lovely
- ☐ Mean
- ☐ Nagging
- ☐ Nice
- ☐ Polite
- ☐ Pretty
- ☐ Rude
- ☐ Selfish
- ☐ Show-off
- ☐ Strong
- ☐ Sweet
- ☐ Ugly
- ☐ Unfriendly
- ☐ Weak
- ☐ Wise
- ☐ Wonderful
- ☐ Wrongful

Thomas S. Parish

Appendix N

Demographic Sheet

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHIC SHEET
READ-ALOUD PROGRAM

NAME _____

_____ MALE _____ FEMALE
(PUT AN X BY ONE)

FAMILY STRUCTURE-
(PUT AN X BY THE ONE THAT BEST DESCRIBES YOU)

WITH WHOM DO YOU LIVE?

_____ A. MOTHER ONLY

_____ B. FATHER ONLY

_____ C. BOTH MOTHER AND FATHER

_____ D. MOTHER AND STEP-FATHER

_____ E. FATHER AND STEP-MOTHER

_____ F. GRANDPARENTS

WHICH READING GROUP WERE YOU IN?
(PUT A CHECK BESIDE ONE)

_____ SCHOOL READ-ALOUD GROUP

_____ HOME READ-ALOUD GROUP

_____ NEITHER SCHOOL OR HOME READ-ALOUD GROUP
(CONTROL GROUP)

Appendix O

List of Books Read to School Read-Aloud Group

READ-ALOUD BOOKS
SCHOOL READING GROUP

Title	Author
Matilda	Roald Dahl
The Chocolate Touch	Patrick Catling
The Sign of the Beaver	Elizabeth George Speare

Appendix P

List of Books Read to Home Read-Aloud Group

BOOKS READ TO HOME READ-ALOUD GROUP

Mystery Behind the Wall
Tower of Treasure
The Secret of the Old Mill
Going on Twelve
Benny Uncovers a Mystery
Bambi
Almost Sisters
Me, My Goat and My Sister's Wedding
The Berenstein Bears Trouble With Pets
Alice and the Boa Constrictor
But She's so Cute
Girls of Conby Hall
Uncle Wiggly and his Friends
Bristle Face
Born to Trot
Fudge-a-Mania
Our Amazing Animal Friends
The Prince and the Pauper
White Ruff
The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood
The Chocolate Touch
Henry and the Paper Route
Trapped on the Golden Flyer
Last Stand at Goodbye Gulch
The Indian in the Cupboard
Little House on the Praire
Little House in the Big Woods
Charlie and the Great Glass Elevator
The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe
Heidi
House on the Cliff
5 Children and It
Red Dog
Black Beauty
Babysitter's Club
The Whipping Boy
Ginger Pye
Blue Willow
Henry and Beezus
A Tale of Two Cities
Six Months To Live
Friends-4-Ever
Storm Winds
Super Fudge
Along a Rocky Shore
The Big Cats
Desperate Search
The Red Pony
Matilda
Mr. Poppers Penguins
Farmer Boy
The Little Red Horse
Little Women
Treasure Island
Henry Huggins

Appendix Q

Final Parent Letter to School Read-Aloud Group

December 16, 1991

Dear Parents,

Our school read-aloud group is now officially over. We held our final session last Wednesday morning. I have now tested the children, and the results will be available in the very near future. We also had a "Readers Appreciation Day" last Thursday for all of the children that participated in the reading program.

I hope your child enjoyed participating in the reading program. We completed three books during the 10 week period. If your child hasn't already shared these stories with you, I'm sure they would be glad to do so.

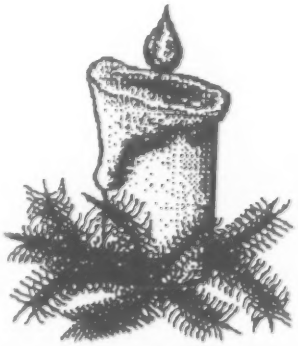
I hope that because of this program, your child will now become more involved in reading. I hope they have seen that reading, and reading-aloud can be fun, as well as educational.

I want to thank you once again for allowing your child to participate in the school read-aloud group. I am very pleased with each and every child. I feel that all children made an effort to attend the reading sessions each morning. You as parents are also to be commended. I realize the effort it also took on your part to have your child to school each morning.

Merry Christmas,

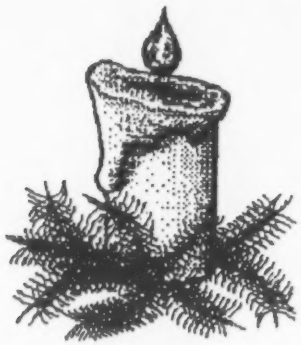
Kelli Wright

Kelli Wright



Appendix R

Final Parent Letter to Home Reading Group



December 16, 1991

Dear Parents,

The reading program has now officially ended. You and your child completed the ten weeks of the read-aloud program about a week ago. I have now tested the children, and the results will be available in the very near future. We also had a "Readers Appreciation Day" last Thursday for all of the children that participated in the reading program.

I hope that you and your child found the ten weeks of reading aloud an enjoyable time. It is also my hope that you found the read-aloud sessions a time to spend with your child that you may not have otherwise had.

I really appreciate your participation in this program. This was not an easy task to undertake, but you all stuck with it, and now we are finished. You are all very fine parents to commit yourselves and your children like you did. I realized way back in September, when I was dividing up the reading groups, that in order for a child to participate in the home read-aloud group, they must have very dedicated, and motivated parents. I believe you all fit into this category.

It is my hope that you will continue to read-aloud to your child, and share the special times together, even though you don't "have to" anymore !!!

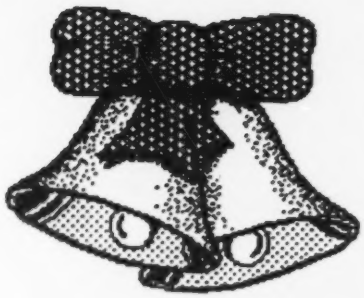
Thanks again for all of your time, and Merry Christmas to each of you.

Kelli Wright

Kelli Wright

Appendix S

Final Parent Letter to Control Group



December 16, 1991

Dear Parents,

Just a short note to remind you that the reading program that was implemented in the fourth grade, earlier this fall has now officially ended. Your child was a member of the control group. This means that your child did not receive any additional reading-aloud, other than what they were already receiving at school in their regular classrooms.

We held a "Readers Appreciation Day" last Thursday for all of the children that participated in the program. Even though your child did not receive any additional read-aloud time, they will be the reference point in which I measure the other two groups. The results of my study should be available in the very near future.

Thanks again for allowing your child to participate in the control group of my study.

Merry Christmas,

Kelli Wright

Kelli Wright

IMPORTANT REMINDER

Just a short note to remind you that the read-aloud program will begin on Monday, September, 28, for both the School Read-Aloud Group and the Home Read-Aloud Group. Thank-You for your participation in this important project. I have not heard from any of you this week, so I am assuming that everything is set. Happy Reading to everyone !!!